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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 002949

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/12/2017

TAGS: [NATO PREL TU YI](#)

SUBJECT: MFA OFFICIAL PREDICTS RENEWED NATO-EU TENSIONS  
OVER KOSOVO ESDP MISSION

REF: A. SECSTATE 165486

[1](#)B. USNATO 541

[1](#)C. BRUSSELS 3482

[1](#)D. ANKARA 2598 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: DCM Nancy McEldowney, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: EU plans to deploy an ESDP police mission to Kosovo could spark renewed NATO-EU tensions by mid-January unless the issue of NATO support for the mission, and the broader problem of Turkey's relationship with ESDP, are addressed to Turkey's satisfaction. A Turkish MFA official hinted Turkey might reconsider its participation in KFOR if the ESDP mission to Kosovo deploys "unilaterally" and especially if the EU seeks to include Cypriot police. The GOT is not satisfied that the EU understands the depths of Turkey's frustration, and continues to seek our and other non-EU Allies' help on this. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) MFA Deputy Director General for NATO Affairs Serdar Kilic warned us December 11 that the next NATO-EU crisis will likely emerge by the second half of January, with Kosovo's anticipated unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) and the deployment of an ESDP police mission there. Based on the lack of EU engagement with Turkey on the issue, Kilic surmised that the EU may be planning a "unilateral" ESDP deployment to Kosovo, without a formal agreement between NATO and the EU on military support for the ESDP mission. He warned that Turkey would view such a step as "EU adventurism."

[1](#)3. (C) Without a clear understanding on NATO support for the ESDP operation, Kilic said, complex problems will arise on the ground. In his view, ad hoc arrangements similar to those in place in Afghanistan will not work in Kosovo since the ESDP mission is much larger, and the PRT model does not exist in Kosovo. Citing Turkey's sizable contribution to KFOR, including its command of Multinational Task Force South, Kilic asked how Turkish forces should act in the event of a crisis involving EU police absent a formal understanding between NATO and the EU.

[1](#)4. (C) Turkey's position remains that military support to an ESDP mission (without Cypriot or Maltese participation) could be provided by NATO under the agreed framework. Kilic stressed that Turkey's position will not change without

meaningful EU efforts to address Turkey's desires for closer ties with ESDP, particularly establishing a relationship with the EDA and concluding a security agreement. He dismissed French proposals (ref b) as a rehash of old commitments and said the EU has yet to deliver on decision-shaping consultations with Turkey on ESDP missions, as promised under the Nice Implementing Document.

15. (C) Kilic expressed dissatisfaction with EU consultations with Turkey on the ESDP mission to Chad (ref c). The EU consulted with Turkey on possible deployment to Chad only after having agreed to the CONOPS and OPLAN. Turkey, Kilic stressed, does not want to be a "toolbox" for the EU; it wants its views considered before final decisions are taken. Kilic also complained about ignorance on the part of EU "experts" on ESDP, saying that officials such as Robert Cooper and Claude Francois-Arnauld do not seem to be even aware of the Nice Implementing Document. In any case, any EU efforts to address Turkey's concerns should go beyond those earlier commitments, he stressed.

16. (C) When asked whether an EU "unilateral" deployment to Kosovo would impact Turkey's participation in KFOR, Kilic expressed hope that this would not be the case but warned "it may come to that point." He said Turkey's withdrawal from KFOR would be detrimental to NATO, NATO-EU cooperation, Kosovo's future, and Turkey's relationship with the EU. For Turkey, the Kosovo ESDP mission is a political rather than technical issue. Ultimately, Kilic bluntly stated, the EU will have to choose whether it wants Turkey or Cyprus in Kosovo.

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